

A Collaborative Dialogue on the Future of Eanes ISD Music

2/19/2026

# EOPA Music Advocacy Special Meeting

# Eanes ISD Excellence

- **Top Ranking:** Ranked as the #1 best school district in the Austin area and among the top districts in Texas and the U.S. for 2026.
- **Academic Excellence:** Consistently receives 'A' rating from the Texas Education Agency.
- **Comprehensive Offerings:** Extensive programs in *Fine Arts*, Robotics, Destination Imagination, Gifted & Talented and Athletics.
- **Community Support:** Supported by the Eanes Education Foundation, PTO and booster clubs which provide significant funding for staff, student development and resources.

# The Challenging Landscape we face at Eanes ISD

## The Problem

“To find \$5-6M in revenues/cost savings to balance the 2026-27 budget, knowing additional measures will be necessary to:

- account for declining enrollment and revenue
- account for increasing costs and
- rebuild the fund balance”

Jan 27, 2026 Board meeting

## The Challenge

- We all want to maintain Excellence in all programs
- Our Focus is on the Music Program
- Excellence at the secondary levels depends upon a strong foundation starting at the elementary level

## How can we help?

- We have built excellence (instructors, students, parents)
- We have commitment and involvement
- We have grown our support over the last 5 years
- Promoting Music Excellence can attract more students! Music (like sports and academics) is a discriminator!
- We are your partners!

We know how to build excellence in Music

## UIL

All EISD Orchestra Consistently earn 'Superior' ratings at UIL Concert & Sight Reading Contest. All schools participate in both String UIL and Full Orchestra UIL.

### WHS

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4 String Orchestras  
3 Full Orchestras

1 Director

### WRMS

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3 String Orchestras  
1 Full Orchestra

2 Directors

### HCMS

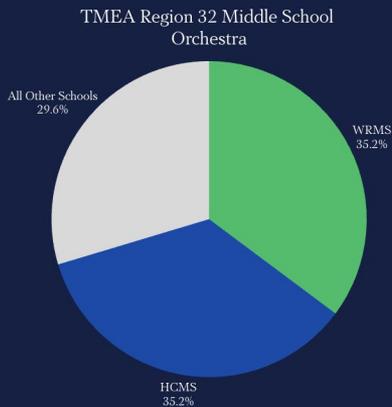
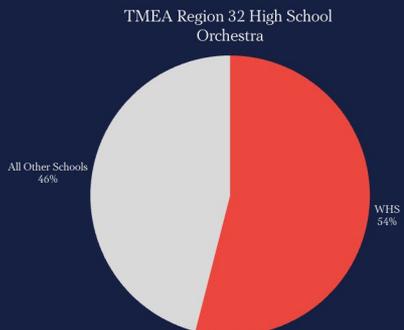
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2 String Orchestras  
1 Full Orchestra

1 Director

## Region Orchestra

EISD Orchestra Consistently earn the majority of seats in the TMEA Region 32 Orchestra String Sections.



## Honors & Accolades

### WHS

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- Consistent All State Orchestra Participation  
2026- 4 students; 2025-4 students; 2024-3 students; 2023-2 student; 2021- 1 student
- ASTA National Orchestra Festival Invited Orchestra in 2025 Atlanta, GA
- Mark of Excellence National Orchstra Honors - Commended Winner 2025
- Texas Music Scholars  
2025-32 students; 2024-29 students
- Heller Awards Nomination 2025

### WRMS

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- 2017 and 2019 International Tours of Italy, Austria, and Czech Republic
- 2012 - 2026 Frequent performers with Disney Imagination Campus

### HCMS

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- 2017 TMEA State Honor Full Orchestra
- 2018 Midwest Clinic Full Orchestra Invitee

## UIL

All EISD Bands consistently earn 'Superior' ratings at UIL Concert and Sign Reading Contest. All schools participate in both Full Orchestra UIL and Band UIL.

### WHS

1 Marching Band  
3 Concert Bands  
3 Full Orchestras  
2 Jazz Ensembles

4 Director

### WRMS

2 Concert Bands  
1 Full Orchestra  
1 Jazz Ensemble

2.5 Directors

### HCMS

2 Concert Bands  
1 Full Orchestra

2.5 Director

## Honors & Accolades

### WHS

- Consistent All State Band Participation
- 2026- 4 students; 2025 - 5 students; 2024 - 5 students; 2023 - 3 students; 2022 - 4 students
- 3 appearances at the Tournament of Roses Parade
- Consistent UIL State Marching Contest appearances  
Performed at the 76th Annual The Midwest Clinic in Chicago (2022)
- Earl D. Irons Program of Distinction Award recipient
- Sudler Shield & Flag recipient

### HCMS

- Consistent first division ratings at UIL Concert and Sight Reading
- Best in Class and Outstanding Band Performances at the American Classics Music Festival in San Antonio
- Performed at the 2025 Texas Music Educators Association as a demonstration group
- Invited Ensemble Music for All National Concert Band Festival (2020)
- Finished 8th in Texas Honor Band competition in 2019

### WRMS

- Invited to perform for the National Concert Band Festival in Indianapolis, Indiana- 2018, 2026
- Named a National Winner in the Mark of Excellence/ National Wind Band Honors Project in 2020 and 2024, and a Commended Winner in 2022, 2023, and 2025
- WRMS Jazz Band was selected to perform at the 2025 Texas Music Educators Convention in San Antonio
- Recipient of consistent UIL Sweepstakes Awards
- Numerous individual Solo & Ensemble Awards



## WHS

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Westlake Improv Troupe  
4 Theater Levels

1 Director

## HCMS

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6th Grade Wheel  
7th Grade Drama  
Technical Theatre  
Hill Country Players

1.5 Directors

## WRMS

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6th Grade Wheel  
Theatre I  
Theatre II

1 Director

## Shows

- Semi-Annual Musical collaboration with WHS Orchestra
- Student Directed Plays
- 9th Annual 24hr Playfest - student written, directed and performed (HS & MS)
- 5 Extracurricular performances throughout the school year
- 2+ in-school curricular performance per level
- Westlake Improv Troupe (4 performances)

Over 50% of Theatre students are taking 2 or more Fine Arts Classes

### Student Participation

Westlake Improv Troupe (year-round): 18

October Show (PUFFS): 55

November Show (JUNIE B): 41

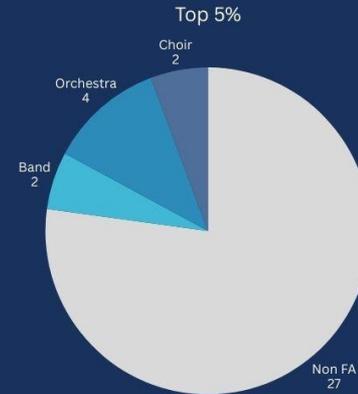
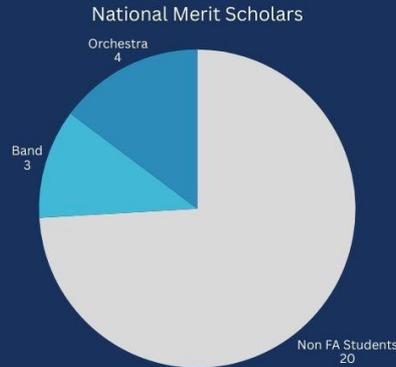
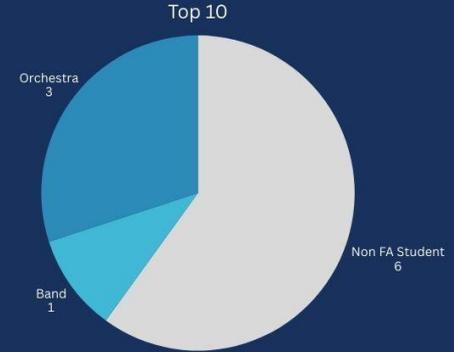
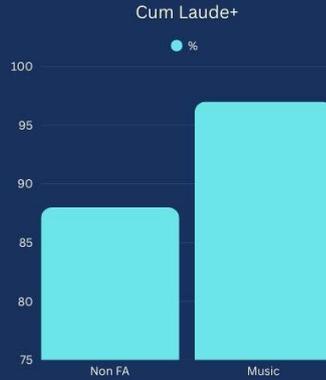
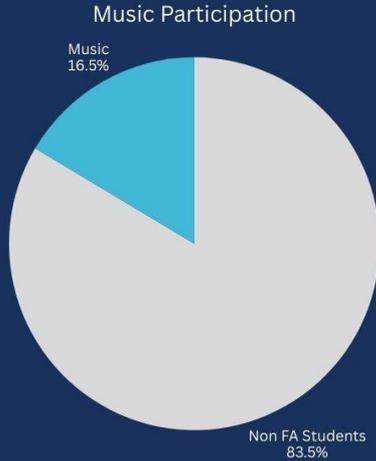
PlayFest 2026: 88 (both MS & HS)

## Honors & Accolades

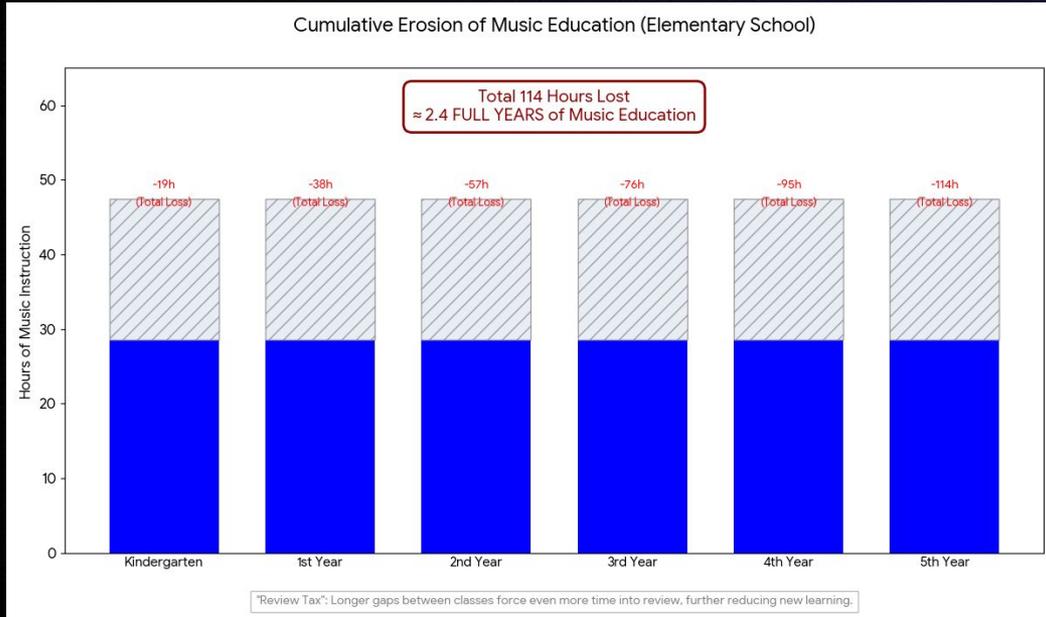
- Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland (as part of the American High School Theatre Festival) for the 4th time in 9 years, premiering a brand new theatrical work on an international stage.
- Previous UIL State Theatrical Design awards
- Performance at TedXYouth Austin (2022)
- Heller Award Nominees (2024)

# Strong Music Programs = Strong Academic Outcomes

## Westlake 2025 Seniors



# Staffing Alignment Specials Proposal



## -19 hr Music Instruction / year

- **The "Review Tax"**  
Longer gaps between classes force teachers to spend more time reviewing, further reducing actual "new learning" time.
- **Cumulative Erosion**  
Over 5 years of elementary school, this equals a **114 hr deficit** nearly 2.5 full years of music education lost before Middle School.
- **Exposure vs Mastery**  
Shifting from a model of skill acquisition to a model of casual exposure which does not satisfy TEKS Grade 5 curriculum guidelines.

**Cut Early Access, Cut Future Excellence**

# Elementary Music Program Lays the Foundation for Musical Excellence

## Music Fundamentals

### Core Musical Skills

Vocal techniques  
Melody  
Dynamics  
Maintaining a steady beat  
Tempo  
Playing instruments

### Musical Literacy

Reading treble and bass clefs  
Reading musical notes and symbols  
Writing musical notes and symbols  
Creating and improvising music

### Active Listening and Movement

Rhythm training through clapping, marching, dancing  
Pitch training through Solfege Hand Sign Movements

### Performances

Concerts  
Musicals  
School performances  
Ensemble and Solo performances

### TEKS Strands Levels

Remembering  
Understanding  
Applying  
Analyzing  
Evaluating  
Creating

**The “Elementary Payoff”:** Strong elementary foundations allow secondary directors to focus on Technique, Musicianship, Artistic Growth



# The Elementary to Secondary Music Connection

Students don't join middle and high school music programs simply because they exist.  
They join because they already value music.

"[Elementary Music] Educators were firm in the belief that if a solid musical foundation, either through enjoyment or enthusiasm, were provided, students would be successful and would desire to continue studying secondary music. Elementary music teachers provide their students with their first exposure to a music classroom, which can set the students up for success or failure. If a student has a negative experience at the elementary level, that student may not be willing to participate in secondary music despite the level of recruitment efforts in place."

"Perspectives of Elementary General Music Teachers on Factors Influencing Student Participation in Secondary Music Ensembles"- Gabrielle Chandler Hardin  
Independent School District Charlotte P. Mizener Lamar University

Large-scale research shows school music environments influence students' interest, identity, and long-term participation decisions:

 Positive classroom experiences

 Musical activities

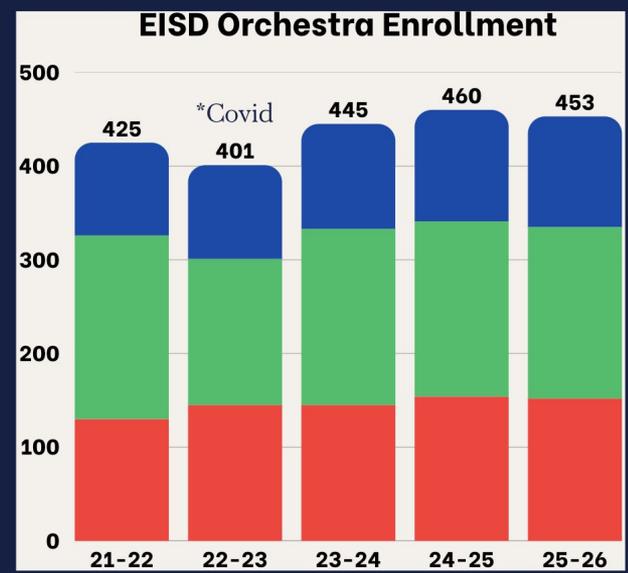
 Teacher relationships

These factors strongly predict whether students continue in music.

Musical Excellence is an Asset for EISD

# EANES ORCHESTRA ENROLLMENT

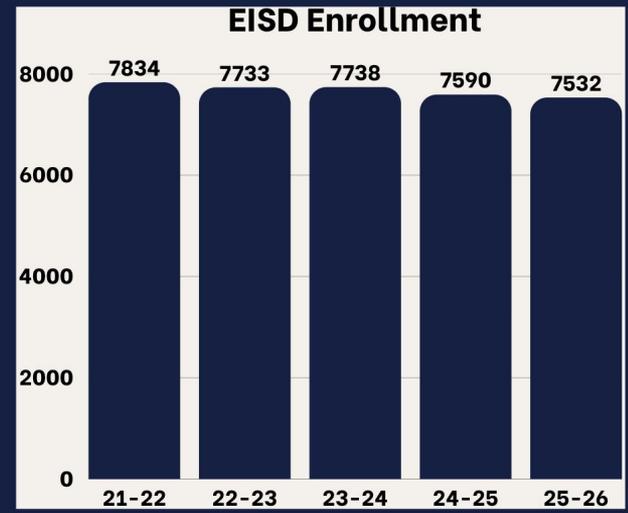
While district enrollment declines year-to-year, orchestra participation has not only grown but remained consistent – evidence of a high-impact program that students choose to continue. Our orchestra programs indicate strong retention, sustained student interest, and clear value to our school community.



## Orchestra Student Retention



Our data shows a large majority of our orchestra students continue into high school, demonstrating strong program effectiveness and the lasting role orchestra plays in students' identity and connection to school.



# Our Programs Attract Students Beyond Eanes ISD

## Future Revenue Possibilities

### Current Student Transfer Data

Orchestra: 10

Band: 27

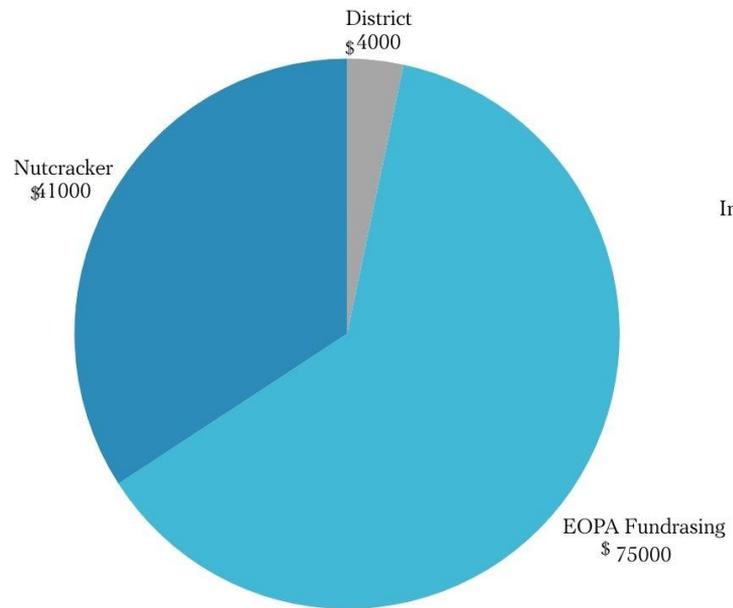
Staffing Alignment Elementary Specials Budget Reduction:  
\$422k

68 transfer students would cover that reduction.

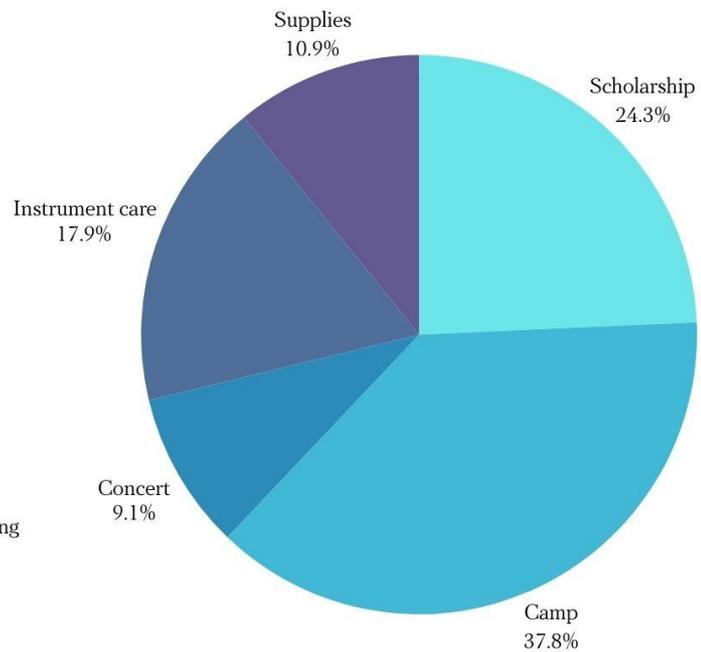
We can help to build an outreach program to promote Eanes ISD as a destination district for the Arts

Cutting the elementary music program puts the current \$230K revenue from student transfers at risk

### Orchestra Funding Profile



### EOPA Program Support



## Proven Academic Success

WHS Orchestra students consistently rank in the highest percentiles for GPA, SAT/ACT scores, and National Honor Society membership. They are academic and campus leaders.

## Austin's Flagship

In a city defined by its mastery of music and media, Eanes ISD must lead, not follow the trend of cutting these transformative programs.

Our Programs Attract  
Students Beyond Eanes ISD

## Destination District

Districts that prioritize the "Human Spirit"

Resilience, creativity, discipline remain top-tier destinations for families seeking comprehensive education.

**Let's invest in our children's future together**

**Thank you!**